

The Legislative Fiscal Division Presents an Agency Profile of:

The Board of Public Education

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Agency Description

Definition of Terms

The Board of Public Education is charged under the Montana Constitution with general supervision of the public school system and other public institutions assigned by law, including the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind. Located in Helena, Montana, the board cooperates with the Governor and other elected officials, the Board of Regents, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, local school boards, the education community, and all Montana citizens, including its students. The Board of Public Education and the Board of Regents meet twice a year as the Board of Education.

The BPE partial list of duties assigned to the BPE includes:

- Adopt standards of accreditation for Montana schools and establish the accreditation status of each school
- Effect a system of teacher certification, including the accreditation of the teacher and administrator training programs
- Consider the suspension or revocation of teacher certificates and hear appeals from the denial of teacher certificates
- Administer and order the distribution of state equalization aid
- Adopt policies for the special education of handicapped and gifted and talented students
- Act as the governing agency for the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind

The Board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor, and confirmed, by the Senate, to staggered seven-year terms. The Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Commissioner of Higher Education are ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board. A student representative is elected by the Montana Association of Student Councils executive committee and serves a one-year term.



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How Services are Provided

The BPE provides its service through a single state agency with offices in Helena. The board is funded for four FTE and is currently staffed by three people (2.70 FTE) that provide research, clerical functions, and management of business affairs for all programs under the purview of the Board of Public Education. Programs include:

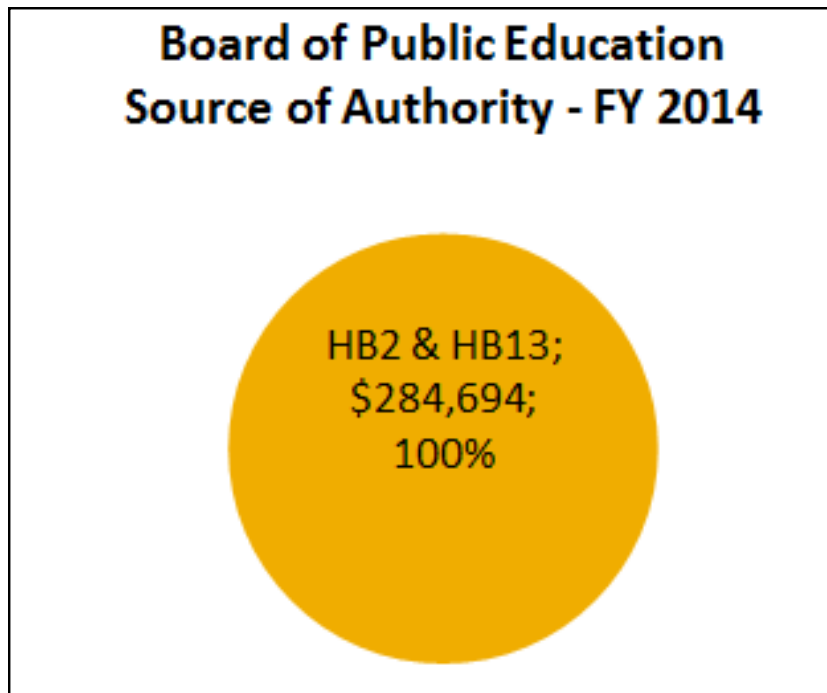
The seven-member Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council (CSPAC), which studies and makes recommendations to the Board of Public Education regarding:

- Teacher, administrator, and specialist certification standards;
- The status and efficacy of approved teacher education programs; and
- The feasibility of establishing teaching certification and the appeals process.

The Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education is attached to the Board of Public Education. This council advises the board and the Superintendent of Public Instruction on Indian education.

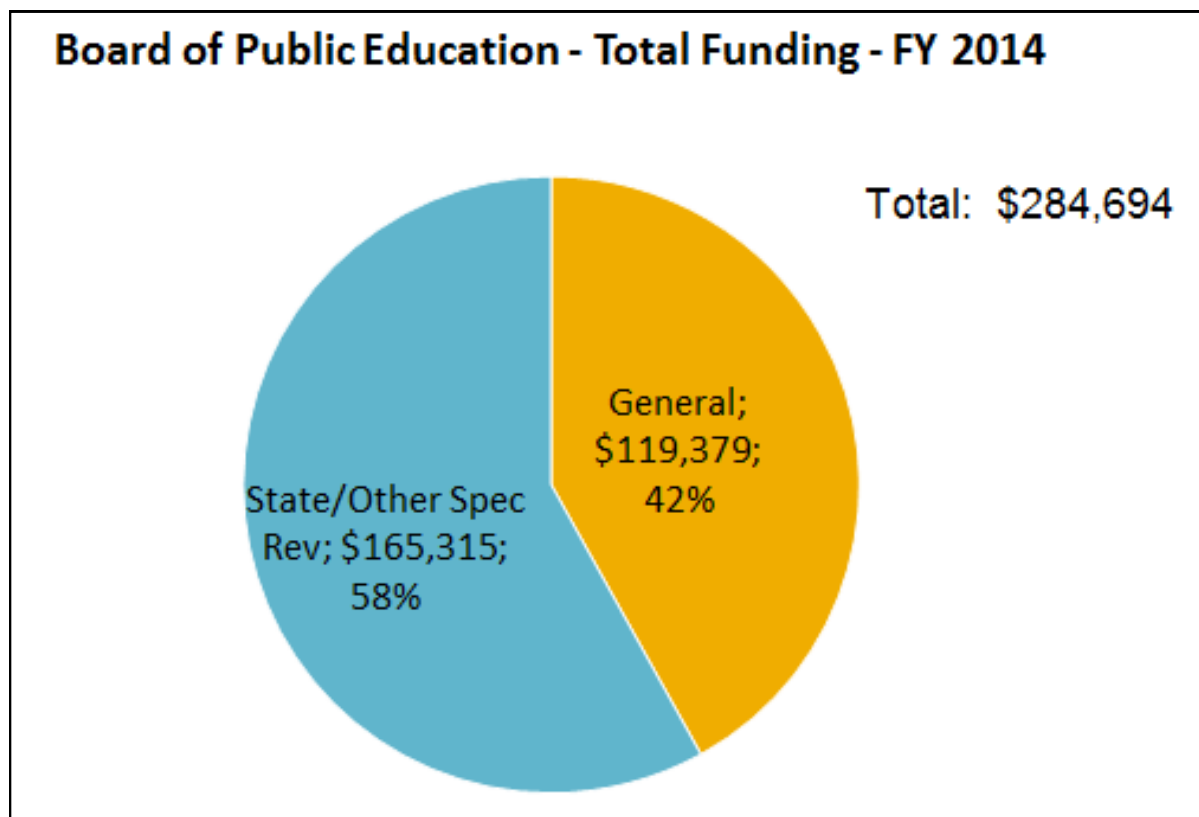
Sources of Spending Authority

The board receives all spending authority through HB 2.



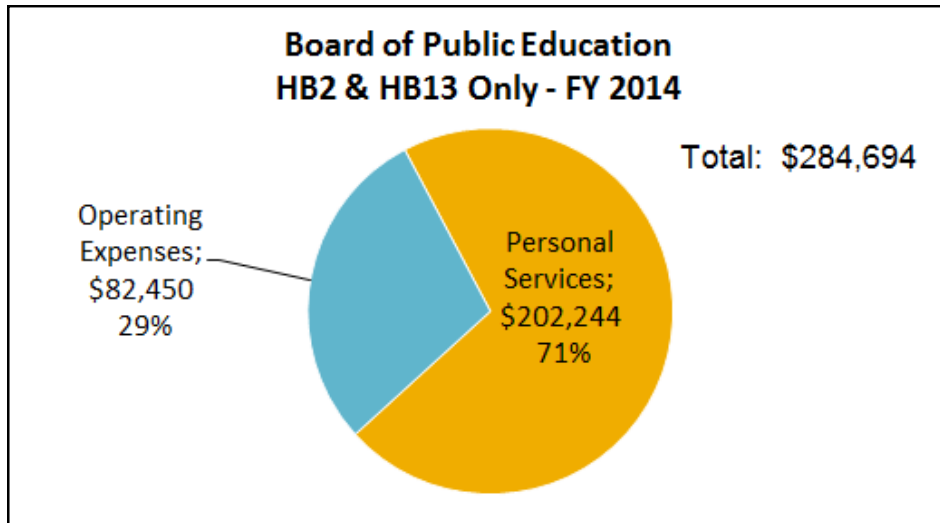
Funding

The following chart show the agency's HB 2 funding authority by fund type.

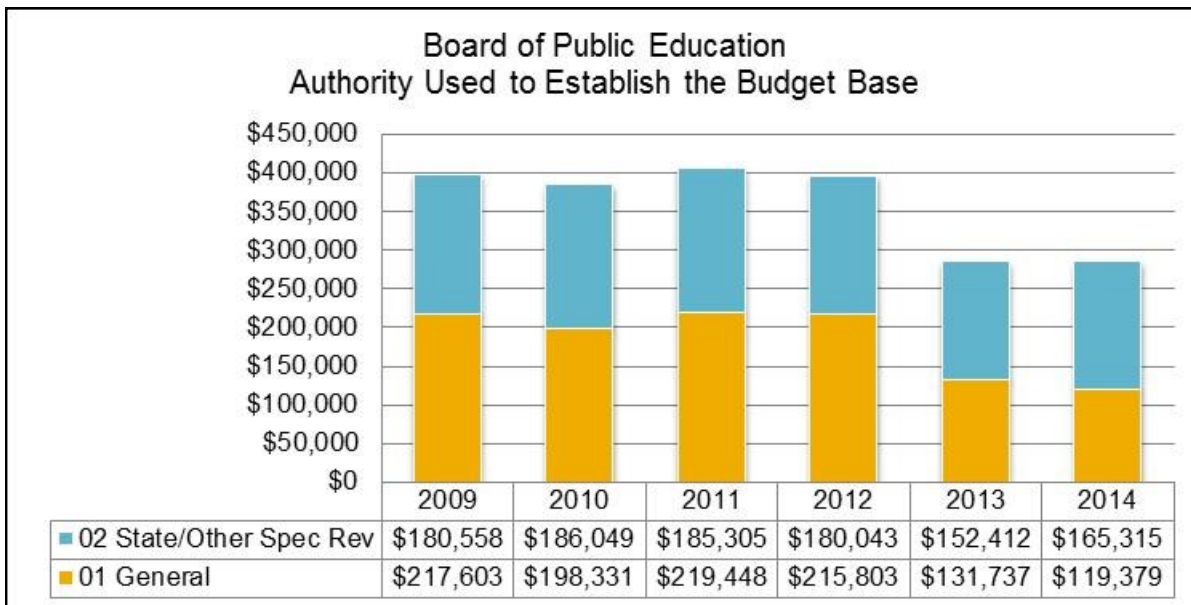


Expenditures

The next chart explains how the HB 2 authority is spent. Personal expenses constitute seven tenths of total expenses for the agency. Operating expenses include meeting and travel expenses for the member of the board, rent for the Helena office. From time to time the agency will incur legal fees related to teacher licensing issues.



This chart matches the agency chart found in the 2017 Budget Analysis, except for slight differences due to rounding. Decrease in personal services expense relative to 2012 reflects reduced staffing requirements. Debt services payments were eliminated in FY 2014 when the agencies copier was paid in full in FY 2013.



How the 2015 Legislature Can Effect Change

The level of on-going activity related to mandated duties and educational issues governs activity for this agency.

In order to change expenditure levels and/or activity, the legislature might address laws governing the powers, duties, staffing, and funding of the Board of Public Education

The legislature is less likely to control:

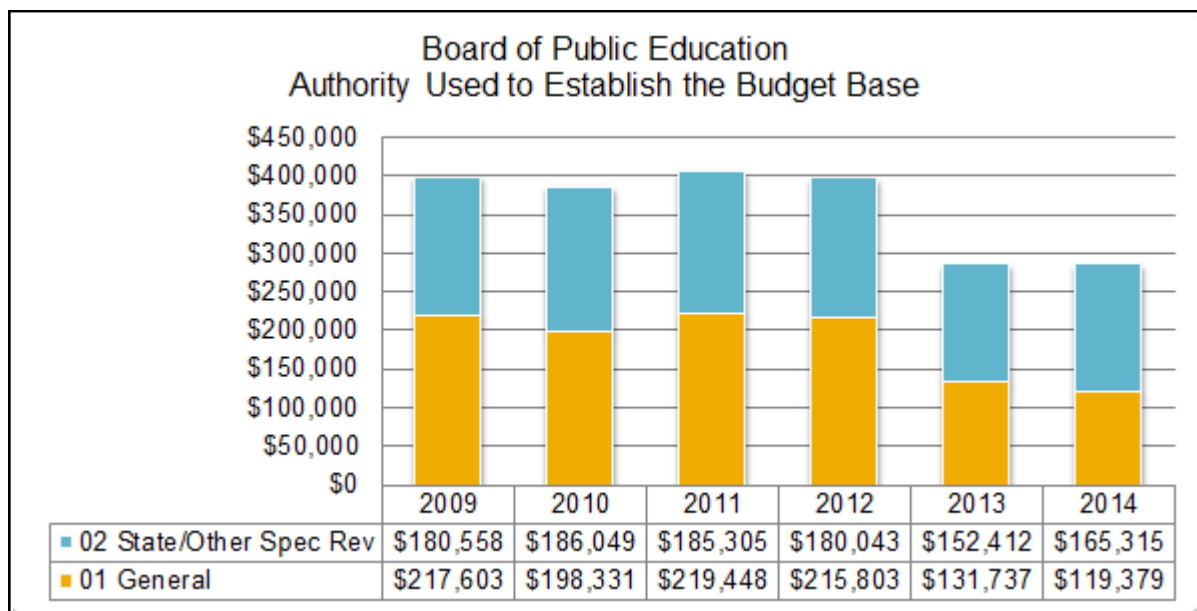
- The number of complaints that merit Board of Public Education action
- Federal legislation impacting the educational system
- Initiatives or legislation responding to citizen action
- Population growth or decline
- Economic factors' contribution to local funding of school districts
- The standards setting process

Major Cost Drivers

Major Cost Drivers			
Element	2012	2014	Significance of Data
Supervised School Districts	416	415	Decrease workload
Certified Educators	12,438	12,236	Decrease workload
Spending/Student	11,000	12,100	Attention to funding standards
Student/Teacher ratio	13.5 to 1	13.8 to 1	Attention to accreditation standards
Board Meeting/Year	6	6	Consistent Expenditures and workload
Certification Standard and Practices Advisory Council	4	4	Consistent Expenditures and workload
Teacher Licensure Hearings	0	2	Increased workload and legal fees

- Personal service costs represent 71% of expenditures.
- The board meets six times each year and is also required to meet two times annually with the Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education as the board of Education. Each meeting generates about \$2,600 in expenses related to travel for board members, communications, and meeting facilities expenses. The Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council meets 4 times per year.

Funding/Expenditure History



The agency is required to spend state special funds before general fund. The reduction in personal services expenses is primarily reflected in a savings in general fund in FY 2013 and FY 2014 as compared to previous years.

Major Legislative Changes in the Last Ten Years

No major changes have occurred in the last 10 years.

For additional information, please contact the agency at:

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